

PREFACE

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[43] **T**his book presents the life and culture of the Lovedu, a Bantu tribe in South Africa. Its central figure is a sacred queen. Against the background of our world, she no doubt appears unreal in some respects, like the hairless fabric of a dream, but in others she is real enough. We can, for instance, readily visualize her, without official husband to cramp her authority, bearing her succumb by a secret consort; or maintaining her strategic position at the centre of the tribe by re-distributing as favours the wives she receives as tribute. But it is a different and far more difficult matter to depict as real what we regard as mysterious; for, hallowed by a heritage of incest, she is chosen for her role by the ghost of her predecessor, and her destined end is death by her own hands, in order that she may rule by divine right. We have tried to show that these mysteries become realities when we see them as means to the supreme end of consecrating her power to make rain, and when we realize that this power implies control of half the cosmic forces and gives men faith to do their daily tasks.

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[152] **O**ur main object has been to describe the culture of the Lovedu. We have set ourselves the task of showing the nature of its parts and their relation to one another. Some space is devoted to the royal institutions; the network of links woven by kinship, marriage and marriage cattle; the legal procedure of compromise and appeasement; and various aspects of magic, witchcraft, and religion. Considered as a whole, the culture emerges as a structure supporting and in turn supported by the Rain-Queen. We may think of the royal institutions as the foundations upon which men build for safety against famine and foes; the culture dispenses with reliance upon garden magic for success of the crops and upon a military system for national defense. Marriage cattle and the kin can be regarded as forging a frame which firmly holds the society together, binding its families, foreign groups and territorial units to one another and to the queen. Strains and strains are taken by flexible devices for adjusting disputes by conciliation. A cult of masks and man-made mysteries appears to surmount the edifice like spires and pinnacles; we may envisage it as the cultural handling of those enigmas of nature, the called themes of growth and fertility.

Next, we have tried to outline the attitudes and interests of the people. They appear as carriers of the culture oriented toward the central figure and helping one another to bear the burden of a timeless society. Our chief concern has been to show how their ideals and motives have been moulded by the culture; why, for instance, they frown upon competition and appraise moderation, and how it is that they are not troubled by guilt or inferiority complexes. We have finally turned to consider some aspects of culture contact, such as the fear and distrust of the agents of an acquisitive society against whom the carriers of the culture have no weapons save secrecy and deception.

In describing these lineaments of Lovedu society, as its stands facing the onslaught of Western civilization, we have set forth the general

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become to interpret economic forces as operating, not in vacuo, but against the whole background of social life.

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It is likewise not economic forces alone, but the diffusion of a new outlook that has caused the major changes in the old co-operative system. Individual achievement was of little account; no one was penalized because he attained only a very indifferent standard of efficiency or industry; people were devoted to a non-material ideal. A man's whole upbringing and training conditioned him to the ideal of reciprocity and helpfulness. Yet in the modern world, where personal achievement is important and rivalries must necessarily arise, the life-adjustment value of this ideal is doubtful. To some extent, the individual adapts himself by accepting European standards when he is in town and relaxing from the strain when he has returned home. He comes back mentally tired, and it is recognised that he is entitled to take a long holiday, even though time is pressing work to be done. His failures in town are attributed, not to causes within himself, but to the operation of external forces. His dismissal is ascribed to the jealousy and witchcraft of a competitor for the same position, and the success of his rival to magic. Rivalry is an unfamiliar situation in economic activities at home, and the competitive, individualistic struggle in the towns is never phrased as being between members of the tribe; the magic that is used to cast him from competitive positions or to cause an employer to favour another is always magic used by members of another tribe, such as the Zulu or Xhosa. The Lovedu traditionally regard luck magic with some suspicion, at least as applied in economic situations. But it has become increasingly necessary in order to re-establish their sense of security; a whole new technique of charms, burning medicines to attract custom, chewing roots to give confidence (what the European might call 'effrontery'), and the like has developed. Many invoke, as before a dangerous enterprise in the old days, the blessing of the gods. Even within the tribal economy itself the spread of ideas of competition has been accompanied by the extension of magic and sorcery to new spheres of activity.

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That this answer to contact with the new economy may not always suffice, we see among many neighbouring tribes—for instance, the people of Fekhupo, 'brothers' of the Lovedu. Among them beer, the quintessence of situations of reciprocity and co-operation, is converted into an article of sale. Beer is provided, even at *ujijima*, as wages, and hence only to the workers; visitors may join the beer-party, but must pay for each calabash they have. This commercialization is deplored by the Lovedu; it is regarded in the same light as charging strangers for board and lodging, a practice that prevails among highveld tribes; and it is almost as bad as what the Lovedu imagine to be the European custom of making relatives who come on a holiday pay their hosts. 'Our hosts are our relatives', said a Lovedu man to us; but while he was prepared to justify the commercial pattern in which salt, meat, tobacco, European vegetables, even money, cost beer in the *ijijima*, the sale of beer seemed to him intolerable. This view fairly reflects the general opinion, as well as the attempt to harmonize the two patterns, among the Lovedu. Rewards are sometimes given to individual *ijijima* workers, who are

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paid in salt and the other commodities mentioned. But the practice is, except for payment in meat, largely confined to Christians. As far as it extends, it completely alters the old long-run reciprocity pattern. There is no social feast. Collective replaces co-operative activity; for personal profit, not sociality, is the prime motive; the social gale is converted into a labour situation, and the interests of employer and employee begin to diverge. Room for roundabout reciprocity is narrowed; instead of the indefinite mutuality upon which a man who helps others to-day may rely in the future, he receives an immediate and individual reward; faith in long-range equivalence of services and obligations gives way to a desire for direct personal satisfaction.

To the new situation, in which the *lipina-giver* corrects and directs and the worker obeys and submits, imperfect adjustments have been made. Direction, hitherto unknown in the economic relations of equals, degenerates to exploitation; the answer to unwilling submission is resentment; and the employer is regarded as a renegade and cheat. He is known to buy a bag of salt for 7s.—and to distribute it so that each worker receives only one-sixth of the accepted value (1s.) of a day's work. The conflict, in which the worker retaliates by calling the employer 'unscrupulous', is only beginning. It may resolve itself by new adjustments, even though an aggravating feature is the fact that it is the Christian who is the budding capitalist and the pagan who is the dependent labourer. From the point of view of progress in agriculture, the danger is that employers are usually progressive, and progress thus comes to stand for anti-social methods. This hampers the work of agricultural demonstrators. It is clear that lasting solutions, even of apparently simple agricultural problems, not to speak of the complicated problems of administration or of wider spheres of culture contact, can be attained only by studying both the forms of the old institutions and psychological reactions among the people to the changes.

Turning to exchanges in the society—that is, purchase and sale, whether cash or kind is transferred—we may consider external and internal trade from the standpoint of whether it falls within a money, money-barter, barter, or gift-barter economy. We use these terms to designate the distinctions mentioned below. *External trade* refers to transactions with people belonging to groups outside or alien to the tribe, such as stores, farmers, and individuals of other tribes. *Internal trade* is largely local, but it may be intertribal when it occurs across the boundaries of the reserve, but between members of the tribe. *Gift barter* is reciprocal gift exchange. There is no exact economic equivalence. *Mutuality*, goodwill, and reciprocity are the primary considerations, but it is not the same as a gift, for a gift implies no return gift, but merely one-sided donations, such as presents to children. *Out-and-out gift* is *apile* (from *he fe*) and, while such gifts imply indirect mutuality, there is no expectation of a return gift. For our present purposes and in the table given below, they are left out of consideration; it would, for instance, be impracticable to distinguish between feeding one's household and giving them presents. From gift barter must be distinguished *pure barter*, in which the aim is an interchange of goods of equivalent value

CHAPTER IX

MARRIAGE AND THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Mate selection and marriage exchanges as reflections of the social structure—social and psychological aspects of nuptial rites—the handling of the themes of sex and concubinage, of barrenness and premature death in the marriage situation.

FROM mummies and masks we turn to marriage and *mwiywalo* (bride-price). The secrecy of the *digwisa* contrasts strangely with the publicity of marriage ceremonial; but they are both cultural devices for dealing with cultural problems. The hidden forces in nature and man are intractable and can be brought under control only by rephrasing them as mysteries, the fear of which is overcome by man-made initiations and cults. Marriage is also an initiation, but its complicated ceremonial is concerned chiefly with laying the concrete foundations of the social structure. This is a gigantic and delicate task, almost beyond the capacity of the culture. Fortunately, we can see more clearly than in the case of the *digwisa* how this task has been accomplished, but unfortunately we shall have space merely to glance at the larger features instead of examining closely the exquisite workmanship and superlative ornamentation.

It is not easy to appreciate the immense implications of marriage among the Lovedu. For one thing, the concomitant cattle exchanges transform it into something wholly unlike the contract between two individuals of different sex among us. The fact that a Lovedu woman may, just like a man, marry a wife, warns us that we are in a world entirely different from our own. The elaborate ceremonial reflects the enormous importance of marriage and of the network of links that are forged by the cattle that pass. The bonds that are created in this manner can be put to all manner of uses. They form the basis of the *mwiywalo* ring of exchanges. They hold together the political system, incorporating as they do foreign elements in the tribe, and casting the net of relationship over the whole country. Marriage and *mwiywalo* provide the pattern even for dealing with homicide: the murder is not avenged; by handing over cattle or by giving his daughter, the murderer and his relatives become enmeshed in the network of exchanges; he is transformed from criminal to kinsman and a potential blood feud is turned into the reciprocal relations between the people of the bride and those of the groom. A man threatened with starvation when his crops have failed and his cattle have died can, by linking himself to the *mwiywalo* ring of another, save both himself and his family.

But the most startling proof of the importance of Lovedu marriage lies therein that the tribunals of the *Akors*—in other words, the organization that corresponds to our legal system—are mainly concerned with marriage and *mwiywalo* tangles; the *raison d'être* of the *Akors* and its law appear to be the preservation of the marriage system. The whole genius of *Akors* law and of *Akors* judicial proceedings is the genius of resolving tensions within the gigantic superstructure built upon marriage and its

581 associated institutions. In these circumstances, it is patently absurd for
 •182 us to orientate ourselves as if marriage affects only personal relationships
 692 between two individuals. To regard marriage as primarily a sexual
 partnership or even as an institution for promoting the procreation and
 rearing of children is to misunderstand completely its great role in the
 social organization.

581 As the main function of marriage is to create and perpetuate alliances
 582 between groups of people, sexual or temperamental compatibility
 between the prospective spouses is not regarded as an ideal. Emphasis on
 romantic love, and pre-marital sexual experimentation, with a view to
 testing out compatibility, would be incongruous with the prevailing type
 of marriage. Mate selection in its ideal form is socially regulated, and
 the ideal form is the basic pattern of all marriages. The social organiza-
 tion determines whom one shall marry, and the parents, not the in-
 dividuals concerned, set the machinery of the organization into motion.
 The ideal marriage is marriage of a man with his mother's brother's
 daughter or of a woman with her father's sister's son. This does not
 mean that all cross-cousins are preferred mates. It is, for instance, con-
 sidered irregular for a man to marry his father's sister's daughter; that
 cases of such marriages are found should not surprise us. There are
 irregularities in every sphere of culture, and the rules of mate selection
 are particularly liable to be upset because of the complex interrelations
 that arise in the social system. The fundamental rule is that a man must
 marry, not the daughter of any brother of his mother, but the daughter
 of that brother who has used his mother's marriage cattle to obtain a
 wife for himself. His mother and his mother's brother are cattle-linked
 sister and brother because, when she married, the cattle that came in
 were handed to the brother for obtaining a wife: the cattle of the sister
 are said to 'build a hut for her brother'. We may thus say that a man must
 marry a daughter of his cattle-linked maternal uncle, and we may call her
 his 'cattle-linked cross-cousin'.

But the Lovedu phrase the matter rather differently and more sig-
 nificantly. They say that the sister has 'built the house of her brother'
 (the cattle-linked brother), that therefore she 'has a gate' by which she
 may enter his house, this gate being 'the gate which the cattle seek', and
 that it is her right to demand from the 'house built by her cattle' a
 daughter who must come to her as her daughter-in-law to stamp and
 cook for her. Note that the right is not phrased as the right of her son to
 obtain his wife from that house; note further that the right is in respect
 of the house—that is, of the wife of the cattle-linked brother, not in
 respect of the brother. That wife is the *mwoyi* (returner) of the sister,
 the person who is obliged to return her daughter to the place whence the
 cattle came; and it does not matter if in the house of the sister there is no
 son to marry this daughter. The *mwoyi* must send her daughter if
 requested, and, if cattle are offered, to be the daughter-in-law of her
 husband's cattle-linked sister, whether that sister has a son or not; for
 it is the sister's right to be served and helped, especially in her old age,
 by the daughter of the house which she has established. The ideal is
 that a girl should not be married to her father's sister's husband or, in

The immortality of Lovedu spirits is of practical importance in their working religion only for two or three generations back; beyond this they are hardly remembered. The spirits that cause most trouble are one's grandparents, and in religious practices these tend to be the most important. Both sides of the family, that of one's father and that of one's mother, are equally important; both cause trouble and both must be placated; and this is an accurate reflection of the social structure, of relationship reckoned bilaterally, and of the cattle links. The configuration of the ancestral world is no different from that of the ordinary world. It is therefore not surprising that all four lines of grandparents are recognized. Even when a spirit in the line of the father's father is being placated, the line of the father's mother may also be mentioned: thus we have heard an officiator in a *phaso* ceremony calling, not only upon his father's younger brother, the spirit troubling his granddaughter, but also upon his father, father's father, elder brother, mother, and elder sister. Dedicated goats to male ancestors tend to, but do not always, run in the male line. As in social or political arrangements, the male line may recede before the female; it may even, as far as ancestors are concerned, become almost completely obliterated. In the Matsui family, for instance, the father's father's line is neglected, except for *Au phaso*, when they cause illness, but the father's mother's line is all important. It is to the latter that the beast Mamujaji is dedicated and it is to this beast that the new corn is given every year. This emphasis reflects the links with the queen which the family wishes to emphasize, for Mamujaji, the ancestor of the father's mother, was mother of Mujaji I.

The coherence of the social and the ancestral worlds is seen even in regard to the implications of the *swaywale* system. Biological relationship not socially recognized is of no importance in religion, and not only can the biological father of an illegitimate child or his relatives never cause illness, for the 'gods follow the cattle' (*modimo e tsetla dikhomu*), but the queen's ancestors cause illness in children of any of her wives, whoever their father may be, and it is the queen who is often required to *phaso* for them. In the gathering together in worship of all relatives the social system is similarly reflected. When after many deaths or much illness in a family the dice order a *swa'koo*, a religious gathering of all relatives, not only the lineage but relatives on both sides (*swa'koo*), including those by marriage, meet. Each brings a basket of corn as a contribution towards the beer for the occasion, but a relative who is on bad terms with the others will, of course, simply stay away.

Not only the scheme of institutionalized social relations, but the nature of these relations in ordinary life is reflected in religion. The fact that the gods were known in life is largely responsible for many of the outstanding characteristics of Lovedu worship. We must not expect a behaviour pattern of humble worshipper to omnipotent god. Awe and trepidation characterise the attitude to the mystical secrets of great *diguma*, but they constitute a category poles apart from the ancestors and *dithugula*. People pray to ancestors as man to man, scolding them or reminding them of their duties to their children. The following prayer, uttered when Pheduli was brought home, is typical: 'We say, here is your corn, Pheduli.

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769 What sort of person are you who do not live happily with your people?

771 To-day all your children have gathered here. They have come to see you given corn. And to-morrow, when they depart, don't let there be a single one who remains troubled. Don't seize them, they are your children.

[11] The difference between a spirit and the very old is not great, for an aged person is sometimes even referred to as 'our god' (*mudimo uona*) and his displeasure during life may be 'seen in the dice' as the cause of illness or, after death, be avenged upon those who have angered him. An old wife of the queen, who had long been ailing, sent her a message saying, 'Unless you give me ox liver, I'll never die, but keep on troubling people.' The queen, notoriously averse from slaughtering cattle for meat, nevertheless complied with this request, because it came from an old woman.

769 Living relatives, even if not old, but because of the social implications
182 of their close relationship, may by conscious or even unconscious
753 (repressed) displeasure in their hearts cause illness. When Ramatiti's
771 daughter was about to set out for her new home, her mother, quite unexpectedly and without the previous knowledge of any one, took some water and squirted (*hu phase*) it on the ground near the shrine, saying, 'You people of ours, I myself, mother of the girl, phase lest they say I remained with a dissatisfied heart.' By intimating that she had no grievance, she tried to safeguard herself from being, at some future date, found in the dice as the cause of her daughter's barrenness. Unconscious grievances are recognized as working like our so-called repressed complexes. If the dice assign an illness, say barrenness, to a person who has no conscious complaint, he must nevertheless phase, but his prayer will be, 'Don't say when you [the ancestors] seize her womb that it is I' (meaning, do not attribute your being 'stirred up' to dissatisfaction in my heart); or he may say, 'If it is I, let the child be well' (meaning, as I am unaware that I am the cause and do not wish to be, let the child recover). *Hu phase* in these circumstances recognizes psychological principles that have been clearly formulated only in the twentieth century. If one has a grievance one prays, 'Why is it that you rise up on my account? If it is I, I say, let them give me such-and-such a thing [e.g. beer of reconciliation] and you gods do not "be after" it' (cause further trouble about it).

781 As the gods have human attributes, 'worship' is not characterized by humility or formality. Even at the most important offerings you may find it difficult to catch the words of the officiator amid the talking and laughter of the onlookers. But you will probably hear him say, 'It is not water; truly it is beer', or 'It is not just *mabudu* (light beer); it is real beer', when he pours out flour and water and, you may see, as we once did, how he winks at his friends who smile at the deception. The asking of a favour from the gods with beer is patterned on everyday conceptions of reciprocity. You sometimes definitely state in your prayer, 'We give to you that you may give her [the patient] life.' Religion is cheerful; at the harvest offering the gods come to drink and be merry with you, and the idea of solemn communion with the gods for the uplifting of the soul, found in higher religions, is absent.

771 The relation of religion and morality is too large a subject for discussion here, for both concepts are different from ours. Their relation is not

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other way of life can oust it from its general pre-eminent position. The man or woman who is in need of a pot or other article in the busy agricultural season vainly places an order with a craftsman, and 'He who takes a journey in spring must transact all his affairs' (i.e. not only where he goes, but also on the way), for he will not be able to pass by again during that season.

Agriculture provides the immediate security of the people, but in turn it relies upon the life-giving rain, the power to make which has been projected upon the queen. The queen is thus the foundation stone of the security of the cultural structure. Her rain-making powers safeguard not only agriculture against the caprices of nature, but the whole country against the attacks of its enemies. The queen is more than that: the method of supplicating for rain has merged with the mechanisms of the social structure and has constructed the bonds with the districts, thus, despite political decentralization, securing the unity of the tribe. And, finally, the elevation of a woman to this exalted position has strengthened the status of women and their important role in the society and has emphasized the virtue of feminine qualities. But the queen is not conceived to be intimately linked with everything in the culture: her position in the *khos* of the men is weakly institutionalized, she has no immediate contact with the European administration to the interferences of which her powers are doubly vulnerable, and the welfare of the cattle elsewhere, as among the *Mafula* and *Xananwa*, ritually brought into relation with the chief, is outside her province.

As rain-maker, the queen controls half the great cosmic forces. Magic may be invoked, the gods propitiated, in the interests and for the ends of individuals, but ultimately these interests and ends and the destiny of the society depend upon the mediation and will of the queen. Man's sense of security in the face of personal misfortunes can be re-established by magic or religion, but the orderliness of cosmic laws is guaranteed only by the relationship of the queen with the supernatural. These laws are inscrutable, but the procedures for arousing pity in the heart of a human queen or for appeasing her anger are intelligible; and thus man can have confidence in undertaking his tasks. Moreover, he need not and must not resort to magic in his major economic activities, for he can and must rely upon the queen. Since the final justification of the pivotal position of the queen is her divinity, garden magic is conceived to be disruptive, like witchcraft: it competes with the power of the queen. One consequence of this conception is that success or failure in subsistence activities is regarded as immediately dependent upon industry, the application of practical knowledge and suitable materials, and that he who uses garden magic is a thief or a witch.

In most neighbouring tribes there is some public treatment of the seeds before they are sown, or the hoes and ploughs are smeared with medicine obtained from the chief: among highveld Sotho such as the *Xananwa* and *Moletshu*, there is even a special hut for storing the sacred seed, a few grains of which are handed to each householder at sowing time, and in this hut, which is associated with the *gomo* drums and with fertility in man, girls reaching puberty are isolated and newly married.

It need hardly be said that the reciprocities are not precisely calculated equivalences, nor a series of exactly balanced obligations. People do not consciously think of the long-run result of their behaviour, and they know that social duty done is not always met of its reward. 'Hard on the ear chaps, it cannot eat the honey it extracts', they say to warn those who expect that their efforts will inevitably be rewarded.

The traits, motivations, and attitudes of the Lovedu become more and more intelligible in the context of the culture as a whole. Whether they are so delicately integrated that we can speak of the culture as an articulated whole, is not a question we shall try to answer. The tribal boundaries are certainly not the boundaries of the culture, which both in its forms and in its attitudes very gradually merges into the culture of a larger area, the limits of which cannot be exactly determined. In view of the astonishingly great variations in one goes further and further from the nucleus, the degree of integration can be regarded relatively only to the area one chooses. Lack of integration is often more apparent than real. With regard both to recently introduced elements and to old elements which in their form or purposes lag behind the changes of the whole culture, the process of integration is proceeding apace, but can never be complete. Thus the cult of panaceism is shedding those elements that are incongruous with the culture. There are also apparent inconsistencies in the divergent forms allowed in the districts and in principles of behaviour which are contradictory. Thus, for instance, revenge is permitted in the magic-witchcraft sphere, but is outlawed in the legal sphere. We may compare this contradiction to our approval of killing an enemy in war, which is conceived to be in the interests of national security, and our condemnation of killing a fellow man in peace, which is a crime against the security of life. Cultures often segregate contradictory aspects of social experience into logic-tight compartments, and there is no conflict as long as the contradictions can either be kept distinct or be reconciled. If they are embodied in the cultural system, no pressure is brought to compare them, and there is no lack of integration either in the mind of the individual or in the culture.

Men feel insecure chiefly in the face of disease and death, disunion, drought, and the disruptive danger of European intervention. The Lovedu attribute their fears to witchcraft aggressiveness and quarrelsomeness, wrong burials, and the 'spoiling' of the country by the white man. We shall deal briefly only with two of these sources of insecurity: disease, which is one of the most constant preoccupations of the Lovedu mind, and the European, whose meddling has changed the shape and meaning of life and has upset the standards of right and wrong.

There is abundant reason for the perpetual anxiety about health, for disease is rife and even minor illnesses provide the occasion for the entry of the witch. Read against the background of their imperfect knowledge of anatomy and of the causation of disease, experience warns men that almost anything, from a simple scratch to the dreaded 'coughing disease', may cause death; in every case, not germs and poisons, but witches and sorcerers, may enter the body and take advantage of the weakness of the patient. Disease is combated, and susceptibility to disease is guarded against, at

planned with over sorghum, and breaking down the contour walls of stone that stopped the rush of water on the slopes. The soil, taxed to its utmost by the mixed crops planted, is gradually becoming exhausted; it is being more easily washed away and the erosion has already silted up the lower stretches of rivers, so that old riverside gardens there have been destroyed. The introduction of donkeys added to the cumulative destructive effect, with which neither the combined forces of agricultural demonstrators and forest rangers, nor the stimulus of agricultural shows and competitions, nor the innate ingenuity of the Native can hope to contend. The fundamental evil is over-population, not over-stocking. In the old days a man hoed near grazing land at his own risk; to-day he must plough where he can.

A miscellaneous series of reactions may be briefly enumerated. Money subserves some purely economic purposes: it purchases various European articles, such as clothes and cloths, sewing machines and soap, candles, lanterns and paraffin, sieves and enamel dishes, iron objects, cycles, and wagons. But, compared with articles of local manufacture, these introductions are insignificant except among Christians. In the new forms of service and co-operation money also has a purely economic function and threatens the old reciprocities. But it is not always easy to say whether money economy is more rapidly transforming institutions than institutions are transforming money economy: often money becomes incorporated into the pattern of goodwill exchanges. The victory may lie with Western conceptions, but incalculable forces are massing against them, and there is a tendency among the best-educated Natives to revive the past in answer to the challenge of the European.

The result will be a subtle and unpredictable interpretation. The suspicion that motivates the reaction is both effect and cause: it is the result of a feeling of insecurity, but it leads to protective adjustments in all spheres of culture. A woman may refuse to don a newly bought European blanket until it has been soiled by being worn by some one else conceivable to its dangers or, as they say, until 'the European can no longer be seen in it'. This attitude is evidence both of an old pattern and of profound distrust of the European. Tropical ulcers are sometimes attributed to Nymaland boys, who are hated for their sexual adventures with Lovedu women; but in fact tropical ulcers have always been there, though the serious lesions appeared for the first time only after the great famine of 1894-6. The psychological determinants of change are results of subtle combinations of objective facts and subjective errors.

Change of diet in recent years has contributed to the evil of malnutrition. Its causes are complex. On the one hand, the variety of old crops has been reduced by the plough and congestion destroys the vegetation that is used as relishes and fruits; on the other, the substitutions are inadequate and consist mostly of starches. Physical degeneration weakens the Native as an employee, lassitude adversely affects the incentives and the energy necessary for the tasks of subsistence, and a sense of insecurity fans the flames of suspicion. The difficulties of the dietician and the medical man increase immensely. This is what an intelligent and particularly unbiased young man feels: 'In European hospitals they plan

to kill us by poisoning and starving us, because they dislike hearing the
 groaning of a sick man. They will not allow us to go into the sun when
 we are getting well. The nurses ill-treat us if we do what we think is
 right. We get no filling food and our only enjoyment, conversation with
 one another, is repressed by the command to "shut up". So profound
 is the suspicion, that one of our good friends died rather than go to
 hospital, while another, who had sustained a compound fracture, was
 persuaded to accept our advice to be taken to a European doctor only at
 the very last moment.

Yet let us not forget that in 1939 a tribal 'Cabinet' was set up and one
 of its 'ministers' was the guardian of health. His last message to us was
 that, in accordance with a decision of the 'Cabinet', he 'was watching the
 diet of the capital and had decided upon strictly prohibiting the running
 about of fowls'. By old and still persisting custom, it should be men-
 tioned, fowls are not allowed in the capital, because, it is said, they are
 dirty animals.

Western culture hardly undermines magic and witchcraft: police
 boys use magic to ward off 'the spears of their enemies', guns are 'doc-
 tined' to make them shoot straight and even the inadequacies of European
 justice are compensated by magic (*Au nicksa*). In this respect the culture
 has met the challenge, however inappropriately from our point of view.
 But it has failed to handle successfully the spirit of modern inquiry
 found among those who have been to school or have been stimulated by
 their experiences in the towns. Young men do not understand the long
 process of growing into a culture and ask questions which the old men
 cannot or will not answer. These young men, who judge by the standards
 of the little learning which is a dangerous thing, tend to despise what is
 not made intelligible to them. In their eyes, for instance, the mysteries
 of the *digwa* and the *amafjoni* are shams, and the fact that no knowledge
 is imparted in the circumcision 'schools' condemns them as nonsense.
 This attitude and the inadequate response to it lead to lack of respect
 both for traditional values and old people. But the total effect is mini-
 mized by the reassertion of the old values as the young men grow older
 and begin to become part of and have a stake in the culture. Moreover,
 inquisitiveness is stamped as the immaturity, almost imbecility, of youth,
 and the insinuation that the doubts are due to the white man's insidious
 influence goes far to repress them as unworthy and disloyal.

In this book we have described Lovedu culture as it is to-day, touching
 but cursorily in the present chapter upon the changes that have occurred
 or the trends that are apparent in some groups of people. We have seen
 that the interpenetration in the pre-European period has effected far
 greater institutional changes than in the European period. Even the
 incorporation of the cult of spirit possession, which came twenty years after
 the European, represents a far greater direct evolution than the changes in
 forms brought about by the Christian religion. The feature of pre-
 European merging has been incorporation, with modifications, of culture
 elements and the reciprocal effect upon existing institutions and culture
 elements. The feature of European penetration, except in material

753 mother—are important in ancestor worship. Any of these forebears may seize
 761 a man and make him ill, require a dedicated animal or a shrine in his or her
 honour, and, in fact, one may find shrines in one village or kraal to kin of
 several different lineages. In practice the mother's mother is an ancestor
 who most often causes illness in her grandchildren because of her great love
 for them.

621 The core of a large kraal or village (30 to 50 huts) is usually the minor
 lineage, but there are always also affines and cognates, quite apart from the
 spouses of agnatic members of the lineage who themselves are usually cog-
 nates. In kraal matters it is by virtue of being not an agnate, but a member
 of the kindred (*muligo*), that a man has a voice. The core of the district is
 602 sometimes also the lineage of the district head, but the lineage is not a
 634 political group and the influence and authority of its head are not a function
 of his relationship, agnatic or other, to the people living in the district.

643 Districts, of which there are 140—with an average area of 1 square mile and
 population of 250—are linked to the queen on the pattern of cattle and wife
 exchanges. Districts are either held by descendants of one of the original
 agnatic lineages of the nuclear ruling group, or they have been allocated to
esofonisi (wives of the queen) or to immigrant alien groups. They all send
 wives to the queen, who thereby becomes their son-in-law (*mulobala*) and,
 by allocating them to other district heads and to royal relatives, she becomes
 parent-in-law (*romabala*) to the latter. Those lineages of the royal nuclear
 group who send wives to the queen are both 'brothers' (agnates) and re-
 latives-in-law (affines) to her. The use of the mechanism of the social system
 to align groups into reciprocal relations forges a great network of ties radiat-
 ing from the queen to all strategic points in the society. It was in this way
 that large numbers of alien refugees were incorporated into the tribe and
 became related to one another. Payments of tribute and services to the
 queen are thus looked upon as the fulfilment of kinship obligations, in
 return for which the queen not only gives land and protection from enemies,
 but also transforms the clouds into rain and so frees men from fear and
 uncertainty.

602 Thus the kinship ties that bind subjects to the rain queen are interlocked
 with the values and institutions supporting her divinity. The homage in
 641 wives that is paid to her for giving men the blessings of rain, is also the
 643 means of forging the network of kinship ties. The kinship ties, again, con-
 vert political tribute and services due to the queen into morally sanctioned
 ceremonial exchanges between relatives-in-law; and just as there is no need
 for military virtues and military organization to deter enemies, since the
 queen, merely by withholding rain, can secure the defeat of the foe, so also
 there is no need to rely upon force to secure the willing allegiance of sub-
 jects who are treated to the beer that they bring, ostensibly as tribute to a
 sovereign but in reality as gifts from parents-in-law.

643 The queen is accordingly the pivot of the nodal institutions of the society.
 772 The benevolent forces in the universe are, as the Lovedu sometimes

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59

say, equally divided between the ancestors and the rain queen. And it is she also who controls, in the interest of social well-being, that half of the cosmic order upon which men's life and happiness are conceived most vitally to depend. This dependence upon her and the moral imperatives of the kinship obligations between her and her subjects are the main factors conditioning the Lovedu outlook upon the world and upon society. Their ritual ideology, linking the queen's mystical powers to the welfare of society, expresses their most important conceptions of the ordering of the natural world; their kinship ideology, incorporated into the political system and converting political into moral obligations, provides the main principles governing men's relations to one another. Agreement and mutual adjustment between individuals become ultimate values which have an overriding validity in determining the rights and duties of man to man. The Lovedu political pattern follows that of the centralised states of the South Bantu; yet it is not force but reciprocity, not administrative machinery but ties of sentiment, not inflexible rules but agreement, that are the great principles of social and political obligation. [693] 772 182

Myths and Origins

The Lovedu are not given to speculation about first beginnings or final causes. There is no world-dawn or far-off mythical event when the order of nature and of society was irrevocably instituted. There is not even a sky-god to account for lightning and thunder or to furnish men with an explanation of stellar phenomena, such as the movement of heavenly bodies. Some of the larger stars are named, for example the Pleiades which are associated with horing time, but the association seems to be a vestige diffused from another culture and has no real significance, whether pragmatic or mystical. A vague, hardly ever invoked myth attributes the creation of the world and man to *Khuzwane* who left his footprints on certain rocks in the north when they were still new and soft. But the act of creation, like *Khuzwane* himself, is too remote, too unrelated to present realities, to be of any concern to men; and they find no place in, nor do they in any way influence, the Lovedu philosophy of the cosmos or of society. The Lovedu apparently feel the need to posit a first or final cause, but such a cause has not continued to operate as a force. An inexplicable affliction such as sterility appears sometimes to be attributed to *Mudimo*, the creator-god of the Sotho, who, according to Lovedu thought, is identical with *Khuzwane*; but *Mudimo* in this context is to be equated with a conditional destiny, and thus does not imply belief in fatalism since the course of events can be deflected by man-made medicines. Nor is there any supplication of the creator, for the Lovedu do not conceive of any link between their ancestor spirits and the creator: *Khuzwane* cannot be approached through the ancestors. [821] 773 776

Thus origins of the cosmic order and wonders of celestial phenomena do not exercise the Lovedu mind. When Simeon, a close relative of the queen, whom we had interested in these things, asked the old men about them, [821] 772 821

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Conclusions

42 Emerging clearly from this study is the fundamental role of
 921 property in maintaining the distinctive features of Lovedu
 579 social structure. The scarcity of cattle among the Lovedu and
 the fact that they play little part in subsistence, coupled with
 an attitude to property which makes its accumulation of little
 interest and in which economic aspects of property are not
 always clearly distinguished from the social relationships it
 creates and maintains—all these factors make for a social
 system in which the main function of cattle is their use as
 bride-price and in which women can be used in quasi-economic
 transactions without their status being in any way depressed
 thereby.

58 The independence of the 'house', a basic feature of the
 462 Lovedu lineage, likewise rests upon property, a husband being
 subject to strong sanctions to respect the economic independence
 of each house as against other similar units. Both husband and
 wife have an interest in the development of the 'house' as an
 entity. From the point of view of the husband each house,
 besides increasing his following and adding to his prestige, also
 adds to the number and strength of his relations with affines upon
 whom he can count for economic help and as friends and
 allies. 'Be djudzile le be khesane—people who marry one another
 are people who agree', it is said when a man has the support of
 his affines. To the wife her 'house' is a means of personal fulfil-
 ment and advancement. She has considerable say over the
 property of her 'house'; everything she does for its advancement
 is for the benefit of her own sons, its heirs; the bride-price of
 her daughters ensures an old age free from arduous toil, while
 the marriage of her sons brings in addition the prestige and
 control that a mother has in the households of her sons and
 1613 their wives. The 'house' is the most important unit in the
 structure of the husband's lineage yet at the same time has
 strong economic and social links with the wife's family.

582 An important principle in the social structure is preferential
 602 marriage between the son of a sister and the daughter of her
 uterine brother who has used her bride-price. This form of
 marriage and the moral right of a sister to a daughter-in-law
 from the 'house' established by her marriage cattle are on the